

# Bringing New Works to Life

Collaboration and Interpretation in the Performance,

Recording and Editing of

New Works for Guitar

by

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requirements for the

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This exegesis contains no material which has been accepted for a degree or diploma by the University or any other institution, except by way of background information and duly acknowledged in the exegesis, and to the best of my knowledge and belief no material previously published except where due acknowledgement is made in the text of the exegesis.

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David Malone  
June 2003

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## *Abstract*

This project aims to make clear the nature of collaboration between performer and composer. Whereas the roles of composer and interpreter are essentially sequential, the roles of collaborators are, by definition, interactive. While an interpreter comes to a score as a finished piece of work, a collaborative performer is involved with the composer's creative process before the musical score obtains its final form.

As an intermediary between the composer and the audience, the interpreter must balance the literal requirements of the printed score with his or her own understanding of the composer's intentions and the needs of the performance. The printed score is a necessarily limited medium and interpreters define the extent of their own creative freedom in relation to its constraints and their understanding of its meaning.

The purpose of this Master of Music project is to demonstrate my creative contribution, as both interpreter and collaborative performer, to the realisation of new musical works for guitar that were written between 1995 and 2002 by composers resident in Tasmania. The project consists of a recital of works by Graham Southwell Brown, Russell Gilmour, Maria Grenfell, Don Kay, John Lockwood and Raffaele Marcellino with a master recording of performances of these works for later release on CD or for broadcast. These are accompanied by a performance edition of the works by Brown, Gilmour, Grenfell and Kay that includes my fingerings, editorial marks and the revisions that have arisen from the process of collaborating with these composers. The exegesis outlines my collaboration with the composers of the works, and places the project in the context of writings by performers, composers, and musicologists on the interpretive role of the performer and the nature of collaboration between performer and composer.

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*To Maria*

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## *Introduction*

### **Outline of the project**

At the beginning of the twentieth century, there was little interest by composers in writing new music for the guitar. Berlioz, in his *Treatise on Instrumentation and Orchestration*, first published in 1843, concisely expressed one reason for the guitar's lack of popularity with composers:

It is almost impossible to write well for the guitar without being able to play the instrument. However, the majority of composers who employ it do not possess an accurate knowledge of it. They write things of excessive difficulty, weak sonority, and small effect for the instrument.... (quoted in Dale, 1997, p.16)

As a guitarist, I am aware of the large repertoire for the guitar composed during the last century, and conscious of the role played by the guitarists who have assisted and encouraged composers to embrace the instrument. Foremost among these was Andrés Segovia, who successfully collaborated with Manuel Ponce, Francisco Moreno-Torroba, and Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco amongst others, and by doing so, was able to replace the small-scale, parlour repertoire of his earlier programmes with larger works that better reflected his technical virtuosity and the depth of his musicality.

Segovia's collaboration with Manuel Ponce, however, was recently criticised by Mark Dale in the journal of the Guitar Foundation of America, *Soundboard* (Dale, 1997). Dale outlined a model of collaboration that described the roles of performer and

composer as both autonomous and sequential and, in Dale's view, Segovia's suggestions of revisions to Ponce's pieces constituted unwanted interference that appeared to threaten the composer's autonomy (Dale, 1997, p. 15-16). The model suggested by Dale, however, failed to cater for the interactive process of collaboration and more accurately represented the relationship between interpreter and composer rather than that of collaborator and composer. I have outlined Segovia's own description of his collaboration with Ponce in this exegesis and I would argue that it provides a more useful model of collaboration in cases where the composer wishes to avail him or herself of the expertise of the performer before a work is completed.

Dale is not alone in blurring the distinction between collaboration and interpretation. Robert Martin used the term "collaboration" to refer to a performer following the musical instructions inherent in a score to realise a musical work (Martin, 1993, pp. 122-123). Although Martin aimed to suggest the synthesis of both the composer's and the performer's creative input, the realisation of a musical work from the score would be more accurately described as interpretation rather than collaboration.

The role of collaborator differs to that of the interpreter. Whereas the roles of composer and interpreter are essentially sequential, the roles of collaborators are, by definition, interactive. While an interpreter comes to a score as a finished piece of work, a collaborative performer is involved with the composer's creative process before the musical score obtains its final form.

This interactive process defined the relationship between Ponce and Segovia and, today, composers continue to collaborate with guitarists to realise their musical ideas for the instrument. American composer Terry Riley recently described the benefits of collaboration in conversation with David Tanenbaum, the guitarist for whom he composed his first guitar piece, *Ascensión* in 1993.

I wrote *Ascensión* at the piano knowing that I would be able to collaborate with you. That was an important decision. Because you were able to provide technical knowledge on the guitar, I was able to work solely on musical ideas. Unless a composer is all-knowing and all-seeing, it's a great way to work: you can pool knowledge. (Riley, quoted in Tanenbaum, 1995, p. 11)

Inevitably, collaborators each define the scope of their individual contributions to the creation of a new work. Similarly, interpreters must set their own creative boundaries when preparing music for performance. As an intermediary between the composer and the audience, the interpreter must balance the literal requirements of the printed score with his or her own understanding of the composer's intentions and the needs of the performance. The printed score is a necessarily limited medium and interpreters define the extent of their own creative freedom in relation to its constraints and their understanding of its meaning. In this exegesis, I discuss the individual solutions to this question employed by Glenn Gould, Walter Gieseking and Wanda Landowska.

My choice of these interpreters reflects my own development as a musician. I first encountered the books by Walter Gieseking and his teacher Karl Leimer as an

undergraduate and translated their technical advice to my own instrument, exploring for myself their approach to realising a score. I had also read some of the writings on interpretation by Landowska and admired the numerous Bach recordings of Gould. Although I have since considered the writings of Claudio Arrau, Yehudi Menuhin, Andrés Segovia and numerous other pianists, these three interpreters, Gould, Gieseking and Landowska, provide a good example of the individual choices made by interpreters in setting their creative boundaries.

In this exegesis, I also consider the attitudes of composers to performing musicians and their reasons for choosing to collaborate. My choice of composers, especially Ives, Carter, Cage and Glass, reflected my concern to use autobiographical writing or interviews, where possible, and to touch on some of the shifting attitudes towards performing musicians held by composers throughout the past century.

The purpose of this Master of Music project is to demonstrate my creative contribution, as both interpreter and collaborative performer, to the realisation of new musical works for guitar that were written between 1995 and 2002 by composers resident in Tasmania. It stems from my interest in the possibility of more informed interpretation of the pieces and a greater understanding of the process of collaboration. Like many guitarists, I have a continuing interest in expanding the repertoire with pieces that work well on the instrument.

The composers whose works were included in this project were Graham Southwell Brown, Russell Gilmour, Maria Grenfell, Don Kay, John Lockwood and Raffaele

Marcellino. Although two of the composers, Brown and Lockwood, had professional expertise as guitarists, the others had little or no experience in composing for the instrument and it is this group of composers with whom I collaborated in the completion of their scores.

The project includes a recital of works by the six composers listed above, and a studio recording of the pieces for later release on CD or for broadcast. Performance editions of the works by Brown, Gilmour, Grenfell and Kay, which include my fingerings, editorial marks and revisions that arose from the process of collaboration, also form part of this Masters project. This exegesis aims to place the project in the context of writings by performers, composers and musicologists on the interpretive role of the performer and the nature of collaboration between performer and composer and outlines my involvement with the creation of the works.

## *Chapter One*

### **The role of the interpretive performer**

The American composer Aaron Copland noted that before Beethoven's time the roles of composer and performer were typically combined in the one individual (Copland, 1952, p. 57). In contrast, the present situation is one where the communication of the composer's thoughts most often requires the creative input of the interpreter. As an intermediary between the composer and the audience, the interpretive performer must balance the literal requirements of the printed score with his or her own understanding of the composer's intentions and the needs of the performance. The printed score is a necessarily limited medium and interpretive performers define the extent of their own creative freedom in relation to its constraints and their understanding of its meaning. This chapter seeks to describe and explain the role of the interpretive performer through a discussion of the writings on interpretation in music by the theorist Theodor Adorno and composer Aaron Copland, and by an examination of the approaches to interpretation taken by Glenn Gould, Walter Gieseking and Wanda Landowska.

#### **1.1 Interpretation and meaning in music**

Percy Scholes in the *Oxford Companion to Music* defines interpretation in music as "...simply the act of performance with the implication that in this act the performer's judgement and personality necessarily have their share." (Scholes, 1970, p. 518)

The writer and researcher Theodor Adorno goes further to say that without interpretation, either real or imagined, then by definition there is no music (Adorno,

1994, p. 3). Adorno described interpretation in music by contrasting it with interpretation in language:

Interpretation is essential to both music and language, but in different ways. To interpret language means: to understand language. To interpret music means: to make music. Musical interpretation is performance, which as synthesis, retains the similarity to language while obliterating every specific resemblance. This is why the idea of interpretation is not an accidental attribute of music, but an integral part of it. To play music correctly means first and foremost to speak its language properly. This calls for imitation of itself, not a deciphering process. Music only discloses itself in mimetic practice, which admittedly may take place silently in the imagination, on an analogy with silent reading; it never yields to a scrutiny which would interpret it independently of fulfilment. If we were to search for a comparable act in the languages of intention, it would have to be the act of transcribing a text, rather than decoding its meaning. (Adorno, 1994, p. 3)

Adorno's description of the process of interpretation in music as essentially "mimetic" seems to underestimate the communication from composer to performer through the score. Performers may choose to merely realise an instruction, but inevitably an interpretive performer will seek to derive meaning behind the markings in the score and both composer and performer may share the same understanding of this meaning. An example of this would be an understanding by both performer and composer that a particular accented passage in triple time has a dance-like quality. This essentially

imaginative deciphering process will inform the performer's reading of the score, and in turn this shared understanding may be communicated to the audience.

Many interpretive performers would agree with Adorno that an essentially mimetic rendering of the markings on the page would reveal the correct interpretation of the score. Walter Gieseking and Karl Leimer, whose approach is discussed in more detail below, would appear to share this view. For other performers, the score may hold inherent inconsistencies in meaning that require resolution to realise them in performance. Glenn Gould and Wanda Landowska each have an artistic standpoint that enables them to achieve an individual resolution and their views are discussed later in this chapter.

In lectures delivered at Harvard University in 1952, Aaron Copland (1900-1990) mentioned several issues relating to the interpretation by a performer of a composer's work (Copland, 1952, pp. 57-58). He believed that the preoccupation most performers have for a beautifully controlled sound could hamper them in meeting the expectations of the composer (Copland, 1952, p. 57). He suggested that the composer was not so concerned with questions of technical adequacy or tonal perfection as with the character and expressive nature of the interpretation. For the composer, as for the playwright, it was often more crucial for the significance of a passage or its contextual importance to be conveyed to the listener than for the delivery to demonstrate elocutionary eloquence (Copland, 1952, pp. 57-58). Copland recognised that a performer may find meaning in the score that could provide a basis for an interpretation that a performer would, otherwise, be unable to realise through a merely accurate or controlled performance.



It appears that the British composer Richard Rodney Bennett would share this view. In comparing the interpretations of his *Concerto for Guitar and Orchestra* by Julian Bream and John Williams, he expressed his preference for poetry and depth in an interpretation over fidelity to the score:

‘Julian does some things in the guitar Concerto that are not in the score,’ he said.

‘For example, he does a *rasqueado* that I didn’t write. But he likes the idea of playing it his way and he was determined to do it... Julian’s performance may be eccentric, but it has depth and poetry. John Williams played the Concerto extraordinarily, with no difficulty at all. He is a marvellous player but – I even hesitate to say this – John’s performance didn’t have the poetry of Julian’s.’

(Bennett, quoted in Tosone, 1996, p. 12)

Given that it is now rare for composers to perform their own works, it is reasonable to ask if a composer’s ideas could ever reach the audience exactly as intended or whether an audience could ever be capable of receiving them. British composer Jonathon Harvey noted that the experience of music by audience members is invariably different to what may have been conceived originally by the composer and stated that the older he became the more he realised that the composer’s most precious intentions and designs were woefully missed by the listener (Harvey, 1998, p. xv).

Interestingly, Harvey did not find this dispiriting; rather, it had led him to two points.

First was a realisation that music was in fact bigger than the composer’s intentions, and

second, that audience feedback created a symbiosis whereby, in understanding how the audience perceived one's music, the composer's own perceptions began to change (Harvey, 1998, p. xv).

The composer's ideas are not likely to reach the listener exactly as intended and both the audience and the performer may engage with the work in ways that the composer may not have originally expected and which may complement or even redefine the composer's own understanding of the work. Intentionality is inevitably limited and neither the composer nor the performer can dictate what goes on in the imagination of the listener.

This limit to intentionality in music is described, somewhat poetically, by Adorno: "Music finds the absolute immediately, but at the moment of discovery it becomes obscured, just as too powerful a light dazzles the eyes, preventing them from seeing things which are perfectly visible." (Adorno, 1994, p. 4)

Like Adorno, Copland was aware that meaning in music is not specific or absolute. Copland maintained that there was more than one way of reading a piece of music and moreover that a work that could not be interpreted in more than one way might lack richness of meaning. Each different interpretation must, however, be convincing musically and psychologically (Copland, 1952, p. 58).

In Copland's opinion composers could learn most about the character of their work from the finest interpreters and similarly, in his experience, the finest interpreters tended to be

most ready to accept a composer's suggestions (Copland, 1952, p. 59). Copland noted that, for example, there may be differences in tempi and phrasing that better express the natural curve of a melody or other aspects of the character of the piece that the composer did not know were there until revealed by a performer's interpretation (Copland, 1952, p. 59). It would appear that Copland, like Harvey, had experienced interpretations that had enhanced his own understanding of his pieces.

Copland was clearly open to different interpretations of his music and he acknowledged that the written score could only ever approximate the composer's intentions:

All questions of interpretation sooner or later resolve themselves into a discussion of how faithful the performer ought to be to the notes themselves. No sooner do we ask this than a counterquestion suggests itself: how faithful are composers to the notes they themselves put down? Some performers take an almost religious attitude to the printed page: every comma, every slurred staccato, every metronomic marking is taken as sacrosanct. I always hesitate, at least inwardly, before breaking down that fond illusion. I wish our notation and our indications of tempi and dynamics were that exact, but honesty compels me to admit that the written page is only an approximation; it's only an indication of how close the composer was able to come in transcribing his exact thoughts on paper. Beyond that point the interpreter is on his own. (Copland, 1952, p. 59)

Copland, like Adorno, believed that interpretation was an essential part of music and he did not believe that it was possible for a performer to avoid interpretation and "just play

the notes” as some composers may wish (Copland, 1952, pp. 59-60). Adorno offered a similar view: “Music is more than intentionality, but the opposite is no less true: there is no music which is wholly devoid of expressive elements. In music even non-expressiveness becomes expression.” (Adorno, 1994, p. 6) Not surprisingly, Copland suggested that a more sensible solution was to advise the performer to find a happy balance between a too slavish adherence to the marks on the page and a too liberal straying from the composer’s intention (Copland, 1952, p. 60).

## **1.2 Approaches to interpretation**

This then becomes the central question faced by interpreters: to what extent should the performer feel bound by the score? Interpreters must, and invariably do, forge an answer to this question for themselves which balances the essentially mimetic role of the re-creative artist with the freedom of the performer unencumbered by the composer’s expectations. Three performers, the pianists Glenn Gould and Walter Gieseking and the harpsichordist Wanda Landowska, have dealt with this question in markedly different ways.

The Canadian pianist Glenn Gould (1932-1982) made a distinction between fidelity to a score’s pitches and rhythms and fidelity to the composer’s expressive marks such as tempo and dynamics. The musicologist Kevin Bazzana, writing in 1997, noted that Gould’s approach to Baroque music served as a general model for his approach to the music of all composers. Gould treated all scores as a collection of pitches and rhythms without firm guidelines as to how they may be realised in performance (Bazzana, 1997, p. 37). Although controversial in the realm of classical music, this selective approach to the score is commonplace in jazz and popular music, and not very different to the

attitude to the script in the theatre where the text of the dialogue alone becomes the basis for the interpretation.

Glenn Gould cited his obsession with musical 'structure' to justify his individual performance practice and for Gould structure was to be found in the work's pitches and rhythms rather than through the composer's performance markings (Bazzana, 1997, pp. 57-58). He did not look to the composer's performance markings, such as tempo, dynamics or phrasing, to indicate structure and where he sensed that there was a contradiction with his own understanding, he would resolve it by readily altering or ignoring the performance indication. For Gould, expressive markings and expression itself were subservient to structure (Bazzana, 1997, p. 58).

According to Bazzana, Gould did not assume that 'correctness' had aesthetic merit (1997, p. 39). He was not seeking a 'correct' performance or a 'definitive' performance, nor was he aiming to play "Beethoven's Beethoven", rather, Gould thought of a performance as one possible variation of the work. It was the work as seen through the prism of the performer's point of view. To Glenn Gould, seeking a definitive performance was, in essence, boring, and especially if that implied that, this perfectly definitive interpretation was then to be repeated (Bazzana, 1997, p. 42).

Unlike Copland, Gould did not see the re-creative act of interpretation as necessarily different to the creative act of composition. Accounts of his recording sessions provide an illustration of his overtly creative approach. The producer Paul Myers said "When [Gould] is in the studio, he likes to play as many as ten or fifteen interpretations of the

same piece – each of them quite different, many of them valid – as though examining the music from every angle before deciding on a final performance” (Myers quoted in Payzant, 1992, p. 50). Gould’s own description is similar:

I’ve come in with perhaps five or six, as it then seemed to me, equally valid ideas, and perhaps none of them worked, in which case we would come back in a week and try a seventh. If two or three did work, we then repaired to an editing cubicle, within a week or so, and listened to them...We don’t treat [the taped recording] as the finished product in the studio. (Gould quoted in Payzant, 1992, pp. 49-50)

Gould readily acknowledged the inevitable difference an interpretation might have from the composer’s expectations or from one performer to another, and even from one performance to another by the same interpreter (Bazzana, 1997, p. 39). He acknowledged this openly, embraced the fact and pursued its implications. He did not aim to divine the composer’s true meaning so that it may be revealed to the audience through performance. His ambition was essentially creative and not to be hampered by the preconceptions of the composer.

Walter Giesekeing (1895-1956) emphatically stated the opposite opinion in the influential book, published in 1932, *The Shortest Way to Pianistic Perfection*, which he co-authored with his teacher Karl Leimer. In the “Foreword”, he expressed immense gratitude to Leimer for training him to pay unconditional respect to the intentions of the composer. In his opinion, it was only through carefully following all markings that it was possible

to live in the emotional world of the composer and to understand his thoughts (Giesecking & Leimer, 1932, p. 6). Giesecking suggested that it was only musicians who were less gifted technically and emotionally, and therefore unable to grasp the emotional content of a work, who were inclined to take liberties and to retouch a piece in order to make it “interesting” (Giesecking & Leimer, 1932, p. 6).

Walter Giesecking and his teacher Karl Leimer wholeheartedly believed in the idea of a ‘correct’ performance. Unlike Glenn Gould, they believed that an excellent interpretation could be built only on an absolutely correct execution of the composition (Giesecking & Leimer, 1932, p. 43). They advised their readers that allowances must be made for the fact that a score might not provide all the information necessary and suggested that the performer must, therefore, know the aesthetic rules of rhythm, style and form so as to know when a slight *accelerando* or *ritardando* was relevant or permitted (Giesecking & Leimer, 1932, p. 43). A later publication provided detailed advice on the appropriate treatment of rhythm, use of dynamics, modes of touch and pedalling, and the role of phrasing in interpretation (Giesecking & Leimer, 1938).

Considering their belief that an excellent interpretation could only be built on a totally correct execution of a piece, it is not surprising that Leimer and Giesecking argued that there were a limited number of valid interpretations of a work. To their way of thinking, musicians with a natural sense of interpretation would not differ very much one from another. Leimer noted that when his students played to his instructions he often felt that they responded emotionally to the piece in the same way he had. He further interpreted

this similarity as proof of the accuracy of his own interpretation of the work (Giesecking & Leimer, 1932, p. 45).

Wanda Landowska (1879-1959) was a virtuoso harpsichordist from the generation before Giesecking and a contemporary of Rachmaninoff. Landowska would have rejected the servility inherent in Giesecking's approach to the score. She wrote that though some may have described her as a "humble and faithful servant of the old masters", she claimed that she was in fact neither (Landowska, 1964, p. 400). As evidence, she offered a list of the liberties that she had taken that had attracted criticism:

Critics attack me because I do not play the dotted note in the theme of the first fugue of *The Well-Tempered Clavier*, because I do not always observe a tie where it is marked, but mostly because I add ornaments and rhythmical alterations and because my registrations could not always have been done on the harpsichords of the time. But I take many other liberties that remain unnoticed by my critics, although they are numerous and flagrant... Do not expect a scrupulous reading. Nothing in this world could prevent my interpreting the text as I see it, understand it, and feel it. (Landowska, 1964, pp. 400-401)

For Landowska, understanding the score meant to understand the intentions of the composer through familiarity with his compositional language and historical context:

The goal is to attain such an identification with the composer that no more effort has to be made to understand the slightest of his intentions or to follow the



subtlest fluctuations of his mind. To know what Mozart means when he writes in D major or what Bach wishes to express when he uses E flat major, we have numerous points of comparison at our disposal among various works on which we can rely and on which we can draw conclusions. (Landowska, 1964, p. 406)

Landowska railed against the ignorance that would lead a performer to take liberties in bad taste when performing seventeenth and eighteenth century music (Landowska, 1964, p. 401). But on the other hand, she also rejected the 'sobriety' that afflicted the performance of early music in her day, and suggested that Bach reduced to a straightforward performance would be like transforming a Gothic cathedral into a skyscraper (Landowska, 1964, p. 401). Furthermore, she chided the modern listener of her day for the "wrong-headed" view that any deviation from the printed text was an act of dishonesty (Landowska, 1964, p. 401). Just as Gould would defend the liberties he might take with the printed score as being crucial to better convey the essential structure of the music, Landowska leant towards an historical understanding and sympathy with the composer's idiom rather than structure per se to inform her creativity.

In conclusion, we can see that each of these performers arrived at different solutions to the question of fidelity to the score. Glenn Gould was guided by the structure of the music as revealed by its notes and rhythms. The notes and rhythms provided a basis for a very wide range of creative interpretation in much the same way as the words of a script allow for numerous different interpretations in the theatre. In contrast, Walter Gieseking looked for the true meaning of the score through careful attention to all expressive marks and every printed detail. Gieseking, unlike the others, was on a quest

for a perfectly correct performance, as he believed that only this approach would provide a true understanding of the music at hand. Wanda Landowska claimed a greater creative freedom for herself. She aimed for an interpretation that was informed by an understanding of music history, yet which allowed her the widest possible scope for expressive performance.

In planning this Master of Music project, I was curious about the meaning behind the score and conscious of its limitations. Interpretation of music by living composers provides the opportunity to gain insights into the composer's original conception beyond that provided by the score. Collaboration with composers in finalising the score not only allows this understanding to inform a performance but also allows a performer to use his or her own specialist knowledge to amplify and enhance the composer's original idea.

## *Chapter Two*

### **The nature of the collaboration between performer and composer**

In this chapter, I would like to consider the nature of collaboration between performer and composer. Whereas the roles of composer and interpreter are essentially sequential, the roles of collaborators are, by definition, interactive. While an interpreter comes to a score as a finished piece of work, a collaborative performer is involved with the composer's creative process before the musical score obtains its final form.

Although able to discuss the expectations a composer might have of an interpreter, Copland experienced greater difficulty in describing what an interpreter expected from a composer. Writing in 1952, he lamented that there was, at that time, too little communication between interpreter and composer (Copland, 1952, p. 66). He pointed to relationships between performers and composers past, such as Joachim and Brahms, which resulted in the composition of inspired music, and thus regarded the indissoluble link between composer and interpreter as an essential part of a healthy musical community (Copland, 1952, p. 66). This chapter seeks to examine the collaborative relationship from the performer's perspective through discussion of the correspondence from the guitarist Andrés Segovia to the composer Manuel Ponce. Following this is an examination of how composers may approach collaboration as a stimulus to their own creativity and as a means of overcoming the indifference of the music profession to performances of their new works.

## 2.1 Segovia and Ponce – a model for collaboration?

The guitarist Andrés Segovia (1893-1987) collaborated with numerous composers in his quest to increase the repertoire for the guitar. His association with the Mexican composer Manuel Ponce (1882-1948) lasted for a quarter of a century and resulted in major concert works that have become part of the mainstream repertoire for the instrument. The letters from Andrés Segovia to Manuel Ponce shed light on the composer/ performer collaboration as perceived from the performer's vantage point. This correspondence started shortly after their first meeting in 1923 and continued until the death of Ponce in 1948. In 1989, Miguel Alcázar published an edition of the 129 letters held by the Ponce estate with a translation into English by Peter Segal, but unfortunately, it appears that no letters from Ponce to Segovia have survived (Alcázar, 1989, p. iv).

One letter in particular, from the 28<sup>th</sup> of December 1940, seems to describe well Segovia's expectations when collaborating with composers:

My very dear Manuel: I am surprised by your silence. I has been almost a month that I sent you the Cadenza asking you to modify it in certain passages. Later, a letter that contained another proposition to improve the guitar arpeggios of the very beautiful Andante. Later still, another with a copy of the lines that I sent to Sánchez Pontón, insisting moreover that you vary that portion of the II Movement and, for fear that it had become lost, I again sent you the copy of my congratulations to the brand-new Minister and an example of the tessitura in which the arpeggios I spoke about would sound better. Even though there has

been time to receive a response, you have not answered any of this. And I am uneasy for three reasons. Are you sick? Perhaps the modification I suggested for the Cadenza disturbed you? Has your airmail letter been lost...?

I am optimistic enough to believe that my first fear is purely imagined. I hope you have not contravened the doctor's orders and that, instead of having a relapse, you continue forward. The second interpretation of your silence if it agrees with reality, should not surprise nor offend me. Because it is clear to me that you know two very important factors worthy of being attended to and evaluated before giving into any anger. The first, that there is no one on earth who admires and loves you more than I do. The second that the guitar is an instrument of capricious and illogical technique, which *theoretical possession no one, not even I myself*, can boast of. Throughout all your guitar production, you have had to change entire sections of works already finished do You remember? And my suggestions *have always been* to give greater instrumental fluency to your compositions, to place them on the guitar like they belong there, and not to distort their expression, to cover up so that the deep poetic mists that float in all your works, not dissolve and, in the end, that all the recourses of that beautiful instrument, along with my experience in handling it, serve to interpret your works with the greatest fidelity possible. If you bear all this in mind, as much as you might not wish to change what you have written, it will not however be sufficient motive to be angry.

In any event I will tell you that my opinion about the modification in the Cadenza has changed a lot. Through studying it as it is, and taking it upon myself to alter the position of some chords and changing the octave in which

some phrases develop, it seems to me that I have succeeded in giving it a sound close to what you propose, without instrumental injury. Thus it occurs to me to propose to you: Why not write two Cadenzas for this movement? One you have already written, delicate, poetic, noble, appropriate for more knowledgeable and sensitive audiences. Another more brilliant, with greater wickedness and effectiveness for less musical audiences... And leave the care of administering them up to me... This duplicity, would only be a practical matter, since for publication only the first and original would be included. Tell me soon if you harbor this recourse. And do not forget that what I wish is that all the public, knowledgeable and ignorant, becomes enthusiastic with your work and grants you clamorous success.

Write to me soon. Answer, in one, all of my letters. And I am waiting for a letter or cable from Quesada with the dates for my tournée. Send me the last movement of the Concerto. And adios. Happy new year. A hug for Clema from Paquita and me, and from the two of us for you.

Faternally,

*Andres.* (Alcázar, pp. 229-231)

In this letter, Segovia identified himself as a champion of Ponce's music and reminded Ponce that his motivation was to increase Ponce's reputation through their collaborative efforts. Advocacy, respect and admiration for Ponce's compositional ability recur throughout Segovia's correspondence and may be considered intrinsic to their collaborative relationship.

Segovia was aware that his suggestions to Ponce were influenced by his own musical understanding and were based on his interpretation of the pieces. Segovia acknowledged that the revisions served his interpretation of the work even though his aim was for the interpretation to have fidelity to what he understood to be Ponce's original intention. To serve this aim Segovia strived to suggest revisions that did not stray far from the composer's original notes. An example of this is found in his comment that he had been reconsidering his suggestion for the cadenza and thought that he could achieve a sound close to what was originally intended after changes to the voicing of some chords and the octave of some phrases.

From the letter we can see that a central concern for Segovia had been to make Ponce's pieces more idiomatic. In Segovia's view, his advice had aimed to increase the fluency and sonority of the writing without distorting the original expressive ideas. Segovia provided technical expertise that would not otherwise be available to a composer for the instrument and he suggested that even his own theoretical understanding of the guitar was not sufficient to know what would work well on it. The implication was that no one could know if a passage would succeed on the guitar in advance of performing it or hearing it played and this is what Segovia had been able to provide for Ponce.

Apart from issues of fluency and sonority, Segovia also considered how the piece might be perceived by the audience and, where it was not possible to revise a section with minimal changes, Segovia would ask that Ponce rewrite sections. For example, Segovia suggested that Ponce write an alternative, more brilliant cadenza that would appeal to "less musical audiences". With this suggestion, Segovia admitted that his request for

revisions did not depend solely on musical considerations but was also influenced by how he believed his audience would respond to the piece. Segovia reminded Ponce that revisions were usual in their collaboration and should not be a cause for concern with the cadenza of the *Concierto del Sur*. From Segovia's point of view, revisions were generally required because of the difficulty for anyone to know beforehand if sections would work well in practice. His comments in this letter suggested that Segovia considered revisions to be a common if not integral part of the process of writing for the guitar.

Segovia wrote again to Ponce eight days later and it is unlikely that his suggestion for alternative cadenzas for different audiences had reached Ponce before the composer had despatched his long awaited revisions. In the letter of the 5<sup>th</sup> of January, 1941 Segovia was, in his own words, "radiating satisfaction" that Ponce had sent a revised cadenza that Segovia declared was better in every way and which he believed would be successful in performance, and he noted that there was no longer any need for a second more flamboyant cadenza (Alcázar, 1989, p. 232). Clearly in Segovia's opinion, the *Concierto del Sur* was considerably improved by a revision to the cadenza that superseded the original musically, idiomatically and in its likelihood to appeal to an audience.

The premises underpinning Segovia's approach to collaboration might be summarised as follows:



- No composer could hope to know in advance if a passage truly succeeded on the guitar without either hearing or performing it.
- Revisions are almost inevitable due to the difficulty of knowing beforehand what will succeed on the instrument.
- That his suggestions and changes aim to increase fluency and sonority without compromising the original expressive idea.
- That his suggestions are inevitably linked to his interpretation of the piece.
- There is always more than one solution and the solution that departs little from the original idea is a valid aim.
- The performer's role includes having an understanding of how an audience will experience the performance and this may influence his suggestions to the composer.
- That he is motivated by a desire to champion the music of the composer.
- That the ideal solution is one that supersedes the original, musically and idiomatically.

Segovia's approach to collaboration serves as a useful model where the intention of both the composer and performer is to achieve a finished piece that has greater fluency and a better sonority on the instrument. The composer needs to be confident that the interpretation of the performer is sufficiently sympathetic to his or her own original conception that the resulting collaborative revisions will enhance the work. To collaborate, with these objectives, presupposes that the composer is not disengaged from the audience's response, and in being open to ideas from the performer, the composer improves the likelihood that his or her music is presented more effectively.

## 2.2 Composers' attitudes to collaboration and creativity

The relationship between performers and composers naturally varies from case to case and will be influenced by professional circumstances. Rather than the enduring relationship created by Ponce and Segovia many composers interactions with performers will be governed only by the necessity of providing scores for imminent performance dates. Similarly, not all interpreters will have the relative freedom of the solo performer. Conductors of orchestras, for example, may need to balance their interpretive roles with the practical needs of preparing for performances with limited rehearsal time.

Although many composers find collaboration with performers to be creatively stimulating others may find that their best and most creative work is only possible without regard for either the needs of performers or the taste of the audience. The writings of Philip Glass, Elliot Carter, Charles Ives and John Cage, among others, provide insights into the reasons why composers collaborate with performers and the place that collaboration may have in their careers.

American composer Elliot Carter (1908 -) was a younger contemporary and friend of Copland. In a conversation with Alan Edwards that is available in an edited transcription (Edwards, 1971), Carter cited the composition of his *First String Quartet* (1950) as a crucial experience in defining his subsequent approach to composition (Edwards, 1971, p. 36). In composing this piece, Carter said that for once he had decided to write music interesting to himself without regard to either the public or the performers. He was concerned that the resulting piece would be difficult to understand

and difficult to perform. Although he had not intended it to be unplayable, he felt that it was more difficult than almost any work he had previously heard.

To Carter's surprise, the *First String Quartet* became much admired by musicians (Edwards, 1971, p. 35). In 1953, it was awarded the first prize in the Concours International de Quatuor in Liège, Belgium, and was acclaimed by the composers Luigi Dallapiccola (1904-1975) and Goffredo Petrassi (1904-) when it was performed at a festival in Rome. Although the piece also received angry reactions from some members of the public, Carter said, in conversation with Edwards, that he considered that his experience with this piece helped him to establish guidelines for what he aimed to achieve as a composer (Edwards, 1971, p. 36). The unexpected acclaim by fellow composers gave Carter the confidence to write music that interested him without regard for existing public taste.

Carter acknowledged that this approach could have "disastrous" results with the possibility of both angry performers and audiences. Consequently, he did not expect his pieces to be very successful when performed but felt compensated by the personal pleasure and interest he had enjoyed in composing them (Edwards, 1971, p. 36).

Although Carter was unconcerned about meeting the public's expectations, he was still concerned for his listeners' experience of his music. In later remarks in conversation with Edwards, Carter stated that he aimed to communicate with the listener through music (Edwards, 1971, pp. 79-80). As he saw it there was an obvious hierarchy of values in which communicating feelings and thoughts takes precedence over the desire

to “make musical sense”. For this reason he had avoided systematic approaches to composition such as those used by serialist composers. For Carter they inadequately related to the listener’s psychology of hearing music.

Carter was also aware of how performers perceived his music. His later comments showed that he was attuned to the differences in character of different instruments and he commented that in all of his works since the *Piano Sonata* of 1945, he had attempted to exploit these differences (Edwards, 1971, p. 68). Carter sought the dramatic possibilities arising from having an instrument playing against its nature and used this to balance his use of more idiomatic writing. For Carter non-idiomatic writing was essential and he commented that in his compositions “...there is an ongoing dialectic of affirming and contradicting the character of the instruments involved, which nonetheless have an organic relation to the character of the musical ideas and to the formal-dramatic conception of the whole work in each case (Carter quoted in Edwards, 1971, p. 69).”

It is interesting to compare Carter’s comments with the model for collaboration drawn from Segovia’s interaction with Ponce. Carter intentionally called on instruments to perform in a non-idiomatic way to obtain a dramatic contrast with more idiomatic passages. Segovia, on the other hand, clearly wanted to assist Ponce so that his pieces would sound completely idiomatic as though they truly belonged on the instrument. From the enduring nature of their collaboration this also appears to have been Ponce’s aim. Without understanding the musical imperative for non-idiomatic writing, many performers would hesitate to perform music that appeared to be poorly conceived for their instrument. As Copland has suggested above, performers may be inclined to give

too great a priority to a controlled and beautiful sound at the expense of the composer's musical intention.

Composers in the twentieth century began to ask for approaches to interpretation that were sometimes new and not consistent with performers' expectations. Performers were not always understanding of, or sympathetic to, these changes in expectation and as a result it was common for twentieth-century composers to talk negatively of their interactions with performing musicians.

Charles Ives (1874-1954) complained of unsympathetic musicians who claimed that his music was unplayable (Ives, 1973, p. 141). In his memoirs, which were published posthumously and edited by his friend the pianist John Kirkpatrick (Ives, 1973), Ives said that he believed that there was nothing in his piano or vocal music that he himself could not perform after a few hours or a few days of practice (Ives, 1973, p. 142). He was scornful of the poor attempt by the German violinist Franz Milcke to play through the first movement of the *First Violin and Piano Sonata* when he visited Ives in 1914. After failing to finish the first page Milcke was said to have claimed that it could not be played, that it was awful, that it was not music and that it made no sense (Ives, 1973, p. 70). Ives noted that other musicians, who had made it their business to learn the piece, performed it not many months later (Ives, 1973, p. 141).

Criticism by well-known musicians such as Milcke unsettled Ives and he noticed an impact on his composition. He detected in his *Third Violin and Piano Sonata* an attempt "to please soft ears and be good" (Ives, 1973, p. 71). However, this impact was short

lived. After recounting this experience in his memoirs, Ives writes: "I began to feel more and more...that, if I wanted to write music that, to me, seemed worthwhile, I must keep away from musicians." (Ives, 1973, p. 71)

Music that is new and challenges the expectations of both performers and listeners will almost certainly meet initial resistance and this may well have an impact on a composer's approach to their craft. Negative responses from professional performers naturally provoke a reaction from composers in the steps they take to pursue their careers.

An extreme reaction came from Charles Ives, who chose to compose almost entirely in isolation from professional musicians. In the opinion of Nicolas Slonimsky (quoted in Scholes, 1970, p. 529), Ives virtually ceased interaction with the musical world. He rarely attended any concerts; not even performances of his own music and, apart from copies that he provided to those who requested them, his music was largely unpublished for many years after its composition (Slonimsky, quoted in Scholes, 1970, p.529). From 1902 to 1924, performances of Ives' works were largely limited to those given by friends and fellow amateurs and by 1926, Ives had ceased composing any new works (Struble, 1995, pp. 54-55). It was not until a 1939 performance of the *Concord Sonata* in New York by pianist John Kirkpatrick, and the subsequent Herald-Tribune review by Lawrence Gilman, that Ives's reputation began to grow (Struble, 1995, pp. 56-57).

One can imagine that Ives's decision to pursue composition as an adjunct to his career in insurance provided a creative freedom that was entirely independent of the popularity of

his music with performers, critics or audiences. According to Struble the pieces composed from 1902 to 1908, immediately after his commitment to the insurance industry, are more experimental than his previous work although many existed only in sketch form rather than complete readable scores (1995, p. 60). After this more experimental period, his composition consolidated and he wrote some of his major works between 1908 and 1922, including *Three Places in New England*, the *Second String Quartet*, the *Fourth Symphony* and the *Concord Sonata* (Struble, 1995, p.61).

Ives' situation was unusual in that he composed so prolifically without hearing his music in concert performances. Other composers have reacted more positively to the initial indifference of the musical public, and they have sought solutions that ensured performances of their music so that others would be able to hear it. These have included collaborating with sympathetic musicians and conducting or even performing with ensembles for which they have composed music especially. The need for composers to collaborate with sympathetic performers arises out of this need to obtain performances despite the relatively common indifference of many performers to newly composed music.

Philip Glass (1937-) noted in his autobiography (1987) that his early works, such as the music for Beckett's *Play* (1965) for two soprano saxophones and other chamber works, aroused intense resistance from musicians. His reductive, repetitive style angered most musicians who encountered it. Indeed, he said that most wanted nothing to do with it (Glass, 1987, p. 18-19).

Philip Glass's response to indifference by performers was far more positive and outgoing than that of Charles Ives. In his autobiography, he commented that negative experiences with performing musicians early in his career obliged him to find a solution. Glass wrote: "One of the first things I realized was that if my new music was to be played, I would have to play it myself." (Glass, 1987, p. 19)

When he was younger, Glass had learnt violin and flute and had taken piano as a minor study whilst a composition student at the Juilliard School in New York. In 1967, he formed the Philip Glass Ensemble; an amplified ensemble that, by the early 1970s, had become a standard line-up of keyboards, wind instruments and soprano voice with Glass included as a keyboard performer.

Another composer who took positive steps to have his music heard during the years that he was becoming established was John Cage (1912-1992). Like Glass, Cage also performed his own music and organised his own ensemble. He performed as conductor of a percussion ensemble and at times as a pianist during the 1930s and 1940s and from 1933 to 1943, he appears on recordings of his own music on five occasions (Kostelanetz, 1970, p. 215). Notably, he conducted the percussion ensemble concert in the Museum of Modern Art in February 1943 that was credited with establishing his reputation as an avant-garde composer (Snyder, 1970, p. 37).

Young composers today also face difficulties in having their music heard. Collaboration with a small ensemble or individual performers continues to be a course chosen by many emerging composers who seek to gain exposure and to develop their craft. It appears to



be no less common among composers today than it has been in the past and there are a number of successful models to follow. Not only does the Philip Glass Ensemble provide a model for ongoing collaboration but also Pierre Boulez's Ensemble InterContemporain and Karlheinz Stockhausens's various ensembles are widely known.

The younger Australian composer Liza Lim (1966-) has had a close relationship with a group of musicians called the Elision Ensemble. Lim had composed for many of the performers in this ensemble when they were fellow students with her at the Victorian College of the Arts. In conversation with the composer Andrew Ford in 1993, Lim describes the symbiotic nature of the relationship:

Elision operates like a family because there has been this long-term commitment to the same bunch of people. Having written four works for them – and now I'm writing another – there's a sense in which an interpretive tradition has formed, and the way in which they play in turn influences the way I hear my own music. It's actually a little bit difficult to see where one ends and the other begins, whether the music comes from me or the musicians. (Ford, 1993, p. 159)

For many composers, collaboration with a particular ensemble or performers not only eases entry into the profession but may also continue as an important source of creative stimulation throughout their career. Individual musicians and smaller ensembles have become more important to many contemporary composers than large orchestras.

Steve Reich (1936-) described working with orchestras as depressing compared to composing for his own ensemble or working with the Schoenberg Ensemble in Holland or the Ensemble InterContemporain (Ford, 1993, p. 65). Brian Ferneyhough no doubt would agree. He had described orchestras as: “large, institutionalised groups of performers who don’t really want to play your music anyway” (Ford, 1993, p. 153). In his opinion, the emergence of a subculture of committed ensembles enlivened contemporary music far more than did the occasional high-profile orchestral performance (Ford, 1993, pp. 153-4).

For other composers the time of greatest collaboration with interpreters is limited to the early stages of their careers. Collaboration for some composers may cease as their reputation grows and the need to actively encourage performances of their works diminishes.

John Cage’s attitude towards collaboration with performing musicians changed significantly as he embraced indeterminate compositional techniques. Comments made toward the end of his career about interactions with performers might leave one surprised to learn that in the early stages of his career he had conducted his own ensemble in concerts featuring his music. In conversation with the poet and essayist Joan Retallack and the cellist Michael Bach in 1992, Cage stated that he no longer wished to discuss his work at all with musicians who were in the process of preparing it for performance although he was happy to discuss his music with performers at other times (Cage, 1995, p. 267). His increasing commitment to indeterminacy meant that his focus was on the process of composition rather than the finished product of the final

piece. In an interview with Richard Kostelanetz, he explained why the actual performance was of less concern with an indeterminate piece:

Now an indeterminate piece, even though it may sound like a totally determined one, is made essentially without intention, so that, in opposition to music of results, two performances of it will be different...Now, what this nonintentional music wants to do is...to make it clear to the listener that the hearing of the piece is his own action – that the music, so to speak, is his rather than the composer's... (Kostelanetz, 1970, pp. 10-11)

Toward the end of his career, he avoided attending rehearsals claiming that his presence there put him in the role of either 'policeman' or 'advertiser' for his music (Ford, 1993, p. 181). As he was committed to the listener creating their own musical experience rather than being subjected to the emotional moods of the composer, his presence at rehearsals relegated him to merely correcting misunderstandings with or otherwise defending the score.

John Cage's creative aspirations had quickly moved beyond collaboration with any particular group of performers as his career developed and as his compositional interest moved away from direct control of the concert experience of his music. Philip Glass on the other hand maintained a long and productive relationship with the members of the Philip Glass Ensemble. It is interesting, however, to see how Glass's output broadened beyond writing for this ensemble to include an increase in collaborations with other artists.

From 1968 to 1976, nine works out of a total of fifteen composed by Glass were written for the Philip Glass Ensemble. This included two of his most important compositions from this era: *Music in Twelve Parts* and *Einstein on the Beach*. From 1977 to 1987, only another three out of thirty-one pieces are listed in his autobiography as specifically written for this group (Glass, 1987, pp. 211-215). By 1983-4, the Philip Glass Ensemble had recruited an additional keyboard player so that Glass could take a less demanding role in the ensemble and devote more time to composition (Glass, 1987, p. 199).

Philip Glass has been a prolific collaborator throughout his career. He has collaborated not only with the highly skilled musicians that have performed in the Philip Glass Ensemble but also with other performing musicians, theatre directors, film makers, novelists, choreographers, visual artist, other composers and lyricists. Collaborators have included the novelist Doris Lessing and lyricists Paul Simon, David Byrne and Suzanne Vega.

In conclusion, I believe we can see that collaboration between performer and composer serves a number of purposes. First, it facilitates composition for and exploration of less familiar idioms such as guitar or amplified ensemble; second, it increases understanding by interpreters of new compositional techniques and objectives; and third, it facilitates the easy access of audiences to newly created music. In serving these three purposes it also serves a fourth. It provides ongoing stimulation to many creative performers and composers yielding benefits to their artistic development. Aaron Copland writing in the 1950s maintained that collaboration was a sign of a healthy musical community

(Copland, 1952, p. 66). With the rise of the new music ensemble in the second half of the twentieth century and continued interest by both individual performers and composers in collaboration, it appears that this good health is likely to flourish.

## *Chapter Three*

### **New works for guitar by Tasmanian composers**

This chapter provides an outline of my involvement with each of the pieces in the project and describes the context in which they were composed. The following works were included in this Masters project:

Graham Southwell Brown, *Three Poems for Guitar*

Russell Gilmour, *Fretsongs*

Maria Grenfell, *Di Primavera* for guitar and marimba, and *Four Leunig Pieces*

Don Kay, *Dance Rondos I and II*

John Lockwood, *Mobiles*

Raffaele Marcellino, *Q, Q1, Q2*

All but the pieces by Brown and Lockwood were the result of collaboration with the composer. I have provided performance editions of the guitar solos by Brown, Gilmour, Grenfell and Kay in Appendix A. My performance edition of Grenfell's piece for guitar and marimba is included in Appendix B and a studio recording of all of the works is included in Appendix C.

In many standard works on notation, information for composers on how to notate for guitar is extremely limited. Stone's otherwise detailed work (1980) on instrumental and vocal notation for modern scores fails to mention the guitar, and texts by Read (1979) and Mender (1991) provide little more than a sentence each on classical guitar. Not surprisingly, performance editions for guitar vary considerably in their presentation of

standard effects and techniques such as harmonics, *rasqueados* and *barrés*. I have referred to music edited by musicologists with a background in guitar, including Frank Koonce (1989), John Griffiths (Australian Music Examinations Board, 1995), and Suzanne Court (Young, 1991), and the performer and composer Benjamin Verdery (1996) to guide my own editorial practice, and I have provided a key to the editorial symbols that I have used in Appendix A.

### **3.1 Graham Southwell Brown, *Three Poems for Guitar* (1997)**

Based in Hobart, Tasmania, Graham Southwell Brown (1959-), is a guitarist, educator and composer who owns and practices in a successful multi-media consultancy, *MediaRare Pty Ltd*. He completed a Bachelor of Education in music education at the University of Canberra in 1984 and taught Music, English and Film Studies for ten years at Dickson College and Tuggeranong College in Canberra. His compositions during this period included the musicals *Changes: A musical about the day after tomorrow* (1987), and *Dear Doctor Daedalus: A musical meditation on life's little ups and downs* (1993), and an opera *Orpheus* (1992), as well as music for multi-media use, including music for the interactive multi-media kiosks of the National Library in 1994. In 1997, Brown moved to Hobart and taught contemporary guitar at the Conservatorium of Music, University of Tasmania from 1997 to 2001.

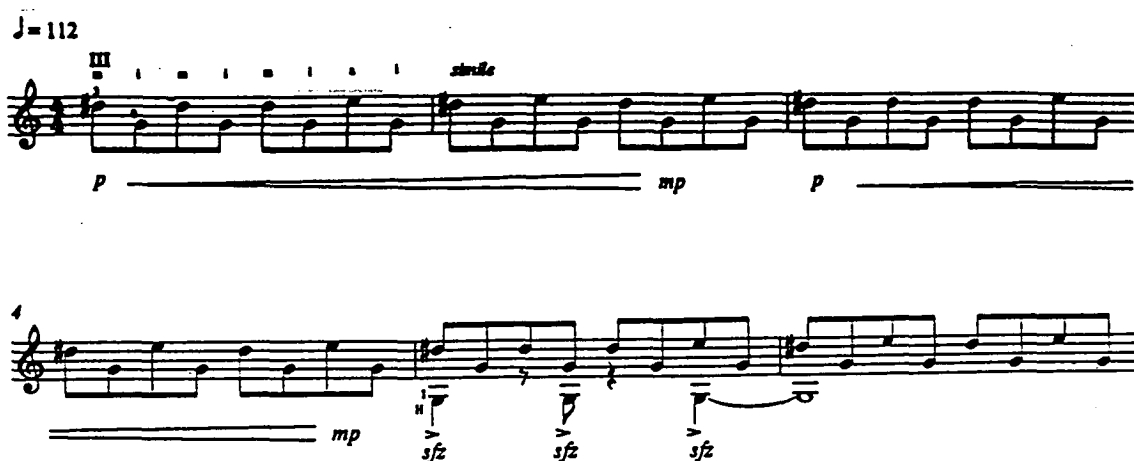
*Three Poems for Guitar* was composed while Brown was undertaking composition studies with Raffaele Marcellino. Other pieces he composed at the time were exclusively interactive, computer-based works including *Guitar* (1997), which was unrelated to the *Three Poems for Guitar*, *Not My Time* (1997), and *I grieve, and dare not show my Discontent* (1997).

*Three Poems for Guitar* is in three movements and has a total duration of approximately eight minutes. The writing is extremely idiomatic, making use of natural and artificial harmonics, open strings in combination with stopped strings for arpeggiated and slurred passages, parallel harmonic movement and quartal harmony. These techniques reflect Brown's extensive knowledge of the instrument in both its jazz and classical usage. Although the piece never sounds overtly like jazz, the alternation between single note and chordal sections and the voicing of the chords occasionally suggest this influence.

The first movement is essentially ternary in form. It opens with a freely flowing section that is suggestive of a blues form, in its twelve bar length with three antecedent/consequent phrases. This is then supplanted by a slow expressive melody that is repeated with increased intensity before it is overtaken by an arpeggiated ostinato, which emphasises the open fifth and sixth strings. Above this are short, fragmentary phrases which build through ascending chords to a climactic arpeggio at bar thirty-two. A return to the opening material then leads to a final cadence drawing on the harmony of the first eight bars to suggest a plagal ending. The second movement is ternary in form with the opening and closing ostinato punctuated by a middle section that follows a descending chordal passage with ascending melodic phrases each making use of parallel harmonic movement. The third movement is essentially rondo-like and incorporates some of the techniques used in the first two movements such as treble melody accompanied by parallel harmony and arpeggiation of alternating stopped and open strings.



Numerous sections demonstrate Brown's ability to support his musical idea with a distinctive timbral effect. An example is the opening ostinato of the second movement, which relies on a soft chord sustained by arpeggiation with the right hand contrasting with accented sforzando bass notes that are hammered with the left hand fingers alone.



Example 1: Graham Southwell Brown, *Three Poems for Guitar*, No.2, bars 1-6 (Appendix A).

Another example can be found in bars twelve to fifteen of the third movement where he uses notes high on the third and fourth strings to contrast with open strings or natural harmonics at the seventh fret of the first and second strings.



Example 2: Graham Southwell Brown, *Three Poems for Guitar*, No.3, bars 9-15

(Appendix A).

My involvement with this piece has been that of interpreter and editor. I gave the first public performance of this piece in 1997, and performed it in recitals in Sydney, Melbourne, Hobart and Launceston. I recorded a performance of this piece for a University of Tasmania CD, *Wind, Wood, Metal* (University of Tasmania, 2001), and have edited a performance edition (Appendix A).

### 3.2 Russell Gilmour, *Fretsongs* (2000)

Majoring in musicology and ethnomusicology as an undergraduate, Russell Gilmour (1956-), also studied composition with Ann Ghandar and Graeme Koehne at the University of New England, Armidale. In 1994, he gave up full-time teaching and moved to Tasmania to devote more time to composition. Numerous soloists and ensembles, including the Queensland, Tasmanian and Adelaide Symphony Orchestras, the Queensland Philharmonic and the Australian Chamber Orchestra have performed his

music. In 1997, Gilmour established a music publishing company, *Opus House Press*, and in 2002, he formed an ensemble of young professional players, called *The Gilmour Ensemble*, to perform and record his music.

At the time *Fretsongs* was composed, Gilmour had recently completed a collaborative project with nine other composers, including Grenfell, Kay and Marcellino, called *The Keating Tangos: 11 short dances across the unpolished floor of Australian politics* (1999) for clarinet and piano. I was also familiar with a work entitled *If Bach Rode Bikes* (1998), which had been written for the Tasmanian Saxophone Quartet.

*Fretsongs* is nominally in two movements and each movement is in several distinct sections to be performed without significant break between sections or movements. The second movement carries the subtitle “...Bach sleeps” and the work, as a whole, reflects Gilmour’s continuing interest in the music of J.S. Bach. Like his earlier work from that time, *If Bach rode Bikes*, *Fretsongs* is melodically inventive, occasionally contrapuntal and maintains strong rhythmic momentum throughout.

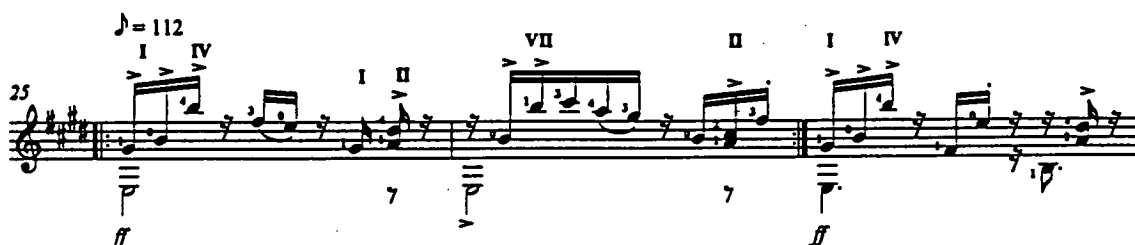
The first movement is in three broad sections. The first opens tunefully with a major tonality in E before a slower transitional passage in A<sup>b</sup> leads into the second extended lyrical section which fluctuates between minor and major tonalities in A. The final section in 5/8 is rhythmic and has a secure A major tonality. The second movement opens with a slow and quiet section in E major, with a transition at the tempo change at bar 156 to a brighter almost dance-like section. This is followed at the next tempo change in bar 173 with a transitional passage that once again fluctuates between major

and minor before arriving at the final section at bar 190 in A minor, which leads, through octave transposition of the melodic material, to a concluding passage with a final cadence onto a C major chord.

Russell Gilmour had previously sketched works for the guitar but *Fretsongs* was the first that he had taken to a final score. Gilmour composed without concern for the location of notes on the instrument although his sense of the guitar led him to make liberal use of open string bass notes and voicing on the higher strings that generally work well. The piece is much less idiomatic in terms of fluency in moving through passages and some editing was necessary to maintain flow. An example of this is from bar 47 to 49 in the second movement, where the fretted notes on the second semi-quaver of each bar were dropped from e to open E, to allow greater sonority for the bass note and greater control of note length in the upper voices. The fuller sound and weight of the lower bass note also suited the prevailing fortissimo dynamic.

Example 3: Russell Gilmour, *Fretsongs*, II (...Bach sleeps), bars 44-49 (Appendix A).

Conversely the fortissimo section from bar 25 to 27 in the first movement was better achieved by raising the bass note on the second semi-quaver of each bar from B to b and by dropping the g<sup>#</sup> harmony note from the third semi-quaver of each bar. This allowed for the rising line of these notes to be better emphasised with *apoyando* strokes.



Example 4: Russell Gilmour, *Fretsongs*, I, bars 25-27 (Appendix A).

Many passages, however, sound successful and examples that sound especially idiomatic include the strongly melodic treble line in the opening nine bars combined with the controlled note lengths in the bass and the gently lyrical A minor section in 6/8 in the first movement from bars 38 to 89 followed by the rhythmic A major section in 5/8.

I commissioned *Fretsongs* in 1999, with financial assistance from the Tasmanian Government through Arts Tasmania, and collaborated with the composer in achieving a final score from the original draft. In editing a performance edition of *Fretsongs* (Appendix A) significant changes to the appearance of the score resulted from including key signatures where previously accidentals were used to indicate each chromatic note, and requesting the composer to expand his use of phrasing marks. Gilmour uses dotted

lines to link related material rather than to indicate melodic phrases, and the shape of phrases is often indicated by his use of accent marks. I gave the premiere performance of the complete work in Sydney in January 2001 and performed it in Hobart in August 2001 and at the 2002 Darwin International Guitar Festival.

### **3.3 Maria Grenfell, *Di Primavera* for guitar and marimba (1998, revised 2001), *Four Leunig Pieces* (2002)**

Maria Grenfell (1969-) was born in Malaysia and raised in New Zealand. She undertook professional training as a composer in New Zealand and the United States and this included a Master of Music degree at the University of Canterbury, a Master of Arts Degree at the Eastman School of Music and a Doctorate of Musical Arts from the University of Southern California. Her teachers included Stephen Hartke, Erica Muhl, Joseph Schwantner and Samuel Adler. Grenfell's pieces have been inspired by poetry, literature, visual sources and Maori culture.

*Di Primavera* was composed for American marimba player Ben Loorz and was premiered by him in March 1999 in Los Angeles with guitarist Eric Benzant-Feldra. With my assistance, it was revised and extended from seven to ten minutes' length in 2001 and the revised version was premiered by Ben Smart and myself in August of that year. The piece was inspired by a trip to Italy and Grenfell wrote in a programme note that "*Di Primavera* ('of Spring') is reminiscent of warm Spring breezes inviting a late afternoon thunderstorm in the Tuscan hills, the lusciousness of Botticelli's painting '*Primavera*', and echoes of a melodic idea derived from one of Monteverdi's fourth book of madrigals." (Grenfell, 2002)

The revised version is in three movements and the overall effect of the first movement is one of perpetual motion utilising minor seventh and quartal harmony and hocket effects between the instruments. A simple melody is stated by the guitar in bar 55, which returns in the third movement in elaboration as the central melody in 7/8 commencing in bar 13. The middle movement suggests a Satie-like *gymnopédie* that evolves into flowing melodic arpeggios in the guitar over a chordal accompaniment in the marimba.

The writing is idiomatic for both instruments, utilising tremolo effects in the marimba part and right and left hand alternation in the two-mallet writing in the first movement. The guitar part makes use of flowing arpeggiation for accompaniment figures in contrast to block chords for punctuation and *rasqueado* effects for chordal crescendos. In general, the balance between the instruments is well catered for, through alternation of single note lines and accompaniment figures between the parts.

The writing for guitar in the second movement from bar 37 to the end is particularly successful in its sonority with arpeggios linking melodic movement in the treble with a functional bass line. In editing the section, I provided a fingering that allows the suggestion of legato in the step-wise movement of the first note of each bar, from bar 38 to 42.

Example 5: Maria Grenfell, *Di Primavera*, II, bars 34-46 (Appendix B).

Example 5: Maria Grenfell, *Di Primavera*, II, bars 34-46 (Appendix B).

Maria Grenfell composed the *Four Leunig Pieces* in May and June of 2002 for premiere by me at the Darwin International Guitar Festival in July of that year. The four movements are each a response to different cartoons from *Short Notes from the Long History of happiness* by Melbourne cartoonist, Michael Leunig (Leunig, 1996). Leunig's cartoons are poignant and whimsical and Grenfell's pieces make use of programmatic effects and story-like development to reflect their source.



The first movement, “How to get there”, suggests a ternary form with a brief cadenza-like run from bars 67 to 69 which precedes the truncated return of the opening section. The second movement, “Atmosphere”, is a waltz in ternary form with a contrasting middle section in which a sparse melody is accompanied with faster flowing arpeggios in 9/8. The third movement, “Spring Diary of a Small, Brown Bird” is constructed in a modular fashion and uses independent motives that are programmatic in nature and suggest the quick movements of a bird. The fourth movement, “Love”, varies a rhythmic figure between 5/8 and 7/8 before a crescendo to fortissimo bars featuring *rasqueado* and *golpe* effects, followed by a rhythmically steady finale, featuring major-seventh chordal harmony, from bar 35 to the end.

The writing is extremely idiomatic as both *Four Leunig Pieces* and the revised version of *Di Primavera* were the result of close collaboration. Grenfell admired the guitar music of composers such as Heitor Villa-Lobos, Leo Brouwer and Phillip Houghton and sought to achieve a similar idiomatic sonority in her own pieces. Grenfell was open to suggestions to achieve this, and examples include the opening bars of “Atmosphere”, where both melody and harmony notes were transposed by octave to achieve the fluency necessary for the wistful nature of this piece and to provide greater interest to the melodic line, which the composer preferred. Similarly, the harmony in bars 41 and 42 was varied from the original to facilitate a position change that maintains access to the original melody. I have provided a performance edition of both pieces, *Four Leunig Pieces* is included in Appendix A and *Di Primavera* is included in Appendix B.

### 3.4 Don Kay, *Dance Rondos I* (1996) and *II* (2000)

Born and raised in Tasmania, Don Kay (1933-) completed a music degree at the University of Melbourne before undertaking composition studies with Malcolm Williamson in London between 1959 and 1964. Kay was Head of Department at the Conservatorium of Music, University of Tasmania from 1990 to 1993 and was appointed a Member of the Order of Australia in 1991.

*Dance Rondo I* (1996) was composed in the same year as his piano trio *The Edge of Remoteness* (1996) and the fifteen-minute piece for orchestra *Aestivernal* (1996). It was Kay's first piece for guitar and Kay later described the origin of the pieces in a programme note:

I composed 'Dance Rondo I' in 1996 as a result of a request by a Conservatorium guitar student. However, the difficulties it posed resulted in his teacher, David Malone, offering to perform it shortly after. David's advice, editing and fingering enabled the piece to be realised in such a way as to encourage me to compose a companion piece especially for him... I've composed 'Dance Rondo II' to complement the first piece, yet to provide contrast. They both are intended to contain dance-like qualities, the first more stately and ritualistic sounding; the second more energetic and vigorous, 'til a quietly retiring, gradually fading conclusion. (Kay, 2002)

*Dance Rondo I* uses a variation of the simple rondo form. It has an essentially symmetrical form of: A B A C A<sub>1</sub> A C<sub>1</sub> A B A Coda, where A<sub>1</sub> represents the same refrain as A, except transposed up by a perfect fourth and C<sub>1</sub> is similar material to C, except transposed down by a perfect fifth. A dramatic descending run of one octave,

employing the locrian mode and ending on e, is used to break the mood and create suspense before a four-bar coda softly ends the piece, without slowing, on d', which is echoed an octave higher with a final d''. *Dance Rondo II* has a ternary form, with coda, where the middle section, rather than providing obvious contrast, is developmental in style. The boisterous opening refrain, from bars 1 to 10, spans the full range of the guitar and provides much of the melodic material that is later used in fragmentary form. A slower and gentler second theme is introduced in bar 23 over a bass accompaniment drawn from the first four notes of the piece. This accompaniment figure then reappears at different pitches and increases in prominence until, in bar 40, it briefly suggests the opening bars of the first refrain although a diatonic fourth below its original appearance. The development section begins from this point with melodic fragments from the opening material recombined and elaborated upon. The opening refrain, at its original pitch, makes a full return at bar 101 and leads to a soft coda, beginning at bar 123, which suggests the melodic material of the second theme over a persistently recurring pedal point on A.

Don Kay expresses his ideas with clarity and economy and his pitch resources in both pieces are tonal and at times modal. The A, B, and C sections of *Dance Rondo I*, for example, primarily use the phrygian mode on A, and both pieces are characterised by Kay's use of multiple metres and, in *Dance Rondo II*, metric modulation.

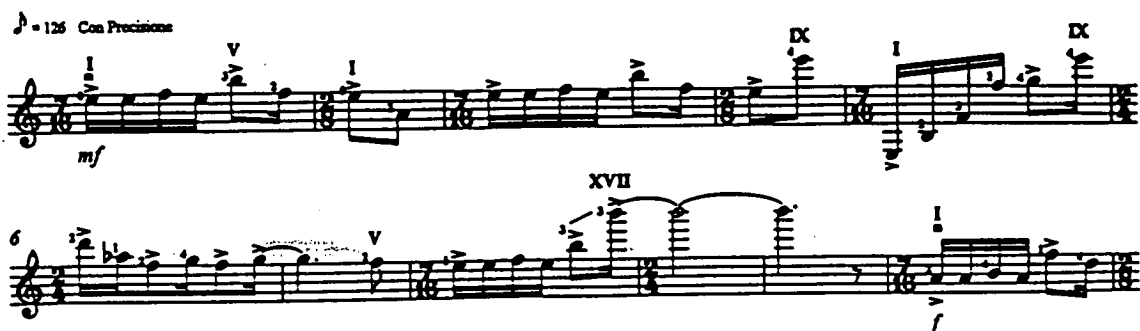
Both pieces make effective use of the tuning of the guitar to provide open string harmony below fretted notes. Some melodic sections, however, did not sit well on the instrument at first. The virtuosic flourishes in bars thirty-one, thirty-six and seventy-two

in *Dance Rondo II* were initially problematic due to the difficulty of crossing strings quickly above the twelfth fret. It was not until a fingering that combined right-hand ‘arpeggiation’ with position changes along the first two strings was found, that the original notes achieved the necessary flamboyance.



Example 6: Don Kay, *Dance Rondo II*, bars 30-32 (Appendix A).

The choice of fingering can greatly affect how a musical idea is conveyed. An example is the opening section of *Dance Rondo II* where I have indicated the first four bars to be played almost entirely on the first string to emphasise the brightness of the opening and to draw attention to the octave  $e' - e''$  in bar 4. This then contrasts with the warmth of the  $g'$  on the twelfth fret of the third string in the following phrase, before the refrain ends strongly on the nineteenth fret of the first string with a  $b''$ . Although Kay had originally envisaged this note as a harmonic, it was the opinion of us both that the fretted note far better suited the dramatic needs of the phrase.



Example 7: Don Kay, *Dance Rondo II*, bars 1-11 (Appendix A).

My involvement with both pieces was as collaborator, interpreter and editor of the performance edition (appendix A). I premiered both pieces, and have since performed them in Melbourne, Sydney, Darwin, Hobart and Launceston. I recorded *Dance Rondo I* for SBS television's *A Fork in Australia* programme in 1999. My collaboration with the composer, whilst the pieces were in draft form, included suggestions for chord voicing, use of harmonics, articulation of chords and single notes and provision of left and right hand fingerings.

### **3.5 John Lockwood, *Mobiles* (1995)**

John Lockwood (1947-) studied classical guitar and composition at the Royal College of Music in London from 1969 to 1972 and qualified as an Associate of the Royal College of Music in 1972. As a guitar student of Carlos Bonell, he also studied composition with John Lambert and Justin Connolly. His compositional interests not only include fully scored works but also electronic music, sound sculptures, pieces employing group improvisation and music for collaborative projects in avant-garde film and theatre.

Scored without bar lines, *Mobiles* is sectional in form, contrasts spacious, quasi-improvisational sections with more rhythmic passages, and uses the pitch material of opening section, in various transformations, in the subsequent sections. The first section employs melodic fragments of varying length, realised with octave harmonics and punctuated by loud dissonant chords. The second section frames a pedal note b with melodic material above and then chordal material followed by single bass notes below before returning via a *dal segno* marking to the first section which, optionally, may be played, all or in part, as octave harmonics or at normal pitch. This is followed by three

*dolce* phrases which lead to a brief transitional section, where fragments of the opening material are transposed by octave to form rising arpeggio figures, which leads to a section of chords separated by repeated bass notes. The penultimate section is marked “Chant” and returns to the sparse, quasi-improvised sound of brief arpeggio figures and individual fretted notes and harmonics to suggest a slowly moving melody before the final “Recall” that marks a return to the opening pitch material in fragmentary arpeggiated form.

The piece is spacious in style and long pauses separate the sections. As a classical guitarist, Lockwood has an excellent understanding of the sounds available on the instrument. He frequently specifies the location of notes to emphasise tonal characteristics and he makes use of a wide ranges of dynamic, tone colour and pitch. In this way, he is able to obtain dramatic contrasts such as the sforzando chords that end the first section.

The image shows a handwritten musical score for guitar, consisting of two staves. The notation includes various musical symbols such as notes, rests, and chords. Handwritten annotations in black ink are present throughout the score. On the first staff, there is a circled '2' above a note, and the word 'Suddenly' written above a group of notes. On the second staff, there is a circled '2' above a group of notes, and the word 'Allegro' written above a group of notes. There are also several circled numbers (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6) and other markings like 'Sforzando' and 'Sobito nonnale'.

Example 8: John Lockwood, *Mobiles*, page 2, lines 1-2 from the composer's manuscript.

*Mobiles* was composed before I arrived in Tasmania, and was the only piece in the project that I had heard performed. It was composed in 1995 for the Melbourne-based guitarist Owen Thomson, who had originally been a student of Lockwood's, and it was premiered by Thomson in Melbourne later that year. My involvement has been solely that of interpreter and I first performed the piece in August 2001 and have consulted with Lockwood on a number of occasions to better understand his original conception.

### **3.6 Raffaele Marcellino, *Q* (1997), *Q1* (2002), *Q2* (2002)**

Raffaele Marcellino (1964-) completed his undergraduate studies in composition at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music in 1985 and graduated with a Doctor of Philosophy (Music) degree from the University of Tasmania in 2002. He has been the recipient of numerous commissions and awards including the Paul Lowin song cycle prize in 1999. From 1995 to 2001, he was on the staff of the Tasmanian Conservatorium of Music, University of Tasmania and acted as its Director from 1996 to 1998.

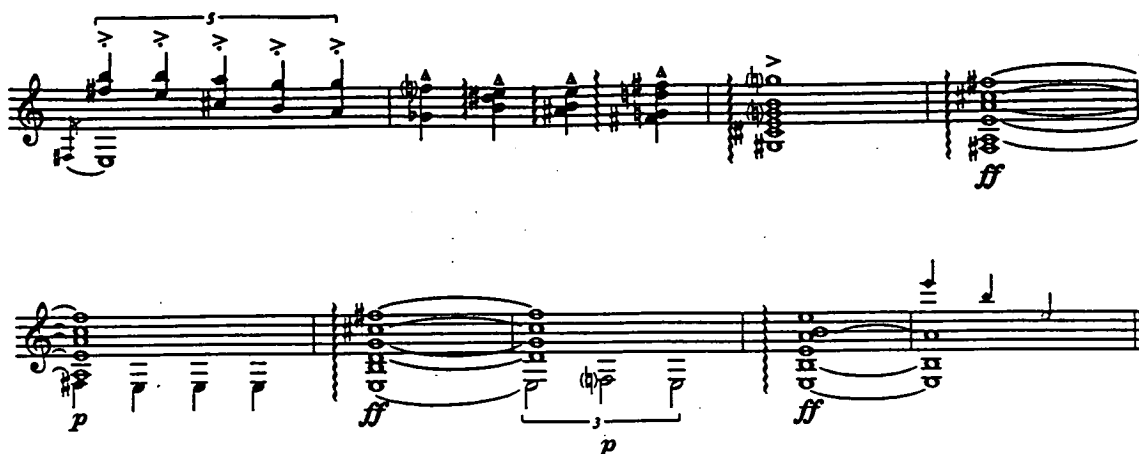
Originally inspired by the fragmentary nature of the Dead Sea Scrolls, the *Q* series is part of an ongoing collaboration between Marcellino and myself in which the composer intends to map the full range of sounds of the guitar through a series of miniatures. Prior to undertaking the project in 1997 Marcellino had not previously composed solos for the guitar. The works that he had recently completed before commencing the *Q* series were on a large scale including a concerto for tuba and orchestra, *The Art of Resonance* (1996), and a concerto for trombone, cello, marimba and orchestra, *On the Passing of Time* (1996).

Three miniatures have been completed, *Q* (1997), *Q1* (2002) and *Q2* (2002). Each miniature grows out of a focus on certain guitar techniques or sounds. The first miniature, *Q*, is six lines in length, and features decelerating pedal notes sounded as right hand harmonics, alternating with notes slurred with the left hand over long open string bass notes. The effect is of finely detailed sounds emerging from the decaying open string bass notes, which necessarily outline a functional progression. *Q* has been published in a collection of Australian miniatures for guitar (Marcellino, 1998).

*Q1* also allows softer notes to emerge from louder sounds that diminish in volume. This miniature emphasises the resonance of full strummed chords. It is ternary in form with the opening three chords returning to signal the ending. *Q2* uses fourteen cells that may each be repeated as many times as the performer wishes. The cells alternate individual notes with groups closely related in pitch until the tenth cell which broadens to an arpeggio-like collection of notes of greater than an octave in range. The cells then diminish in length until a final three-note phrase, which ends on the same pitch as the opening cell.

The pieces are intensely idiomatic in their sonority although they contain sections that can be challenging in terms of fluency, such as the transition to *étouffé* bass notes from right hand harmonics in the first miniature. Some changes to the composer's original markings might better capture the musical idea; for example, the staccato markings in bars 13-14 of *Q1*, if applied literally, may limit the sonority required to emphasise the emerging melodic material. The overall effect is, however, unique and stimulating and the composer's choice of harmony works well on the instrument.





Example 9: Raffaele Marcellino, *Q1*, bars 13-21 from a score supplied by the composer.

*Q* is the result of several drafts and is denser and more complex than either *Q1* or *Q2*. I collaborated closely with the composition of *Q*, and the fundamental material, which combines right-hand harmonics with slurred notes and open strings, arose through exploration of guitar effects in conversation with the composer. As *Q1* and *Q2* were composed after Marcellino had returned to Sydney, they were the result of a less directly interactive process. *Q1* and *Q2* were completed in time for me to perform them, along with *Q*, at the Darwin International Guitar Festival in July 2002.

### 3.7 Interpretation of the works and collaboration with the composers

For each of the works included in this project I have assumed the role of interpreter for public performances and for the recording included in Appendix C. I have also recorded Kay's *Dance Rondo I* for SBS television broadcast, Gilmour's *Fretsongs* for broadcast on ABCFM, and Brown's *Three Poems for Guitar* for inclusion on a CD (University of Tasmania, 2001).

The role of interpreter is undertaken with each performance or recording opportunity and the interpretation of a piece evolves as the performer's experience of it deepens. With each of the works, it has been possible to discuss interpretation with the composer leading up to, and after a public performance. Part of my motivation for this project was to gain a better understanding of the composer's conception of his or her music and I have endeavoured to share this understanding and integrate it with my own interpretation of the works. The composers were able to offer a number of insights that were not represented on the score such as Kay's description of the opening of *Dance Rondo II* as a 'pecking' sound, or Brown's description of the opening of the third movement of *Three Poems for Guitar* as 'yodelling'. In both of these cases, incorporating the composer's description resulted in specific fingerings that I used in performance and included in the edited version of the score.

The roles of composer and interpreter are essentially sequential, and although an interpreter might benefit from the insight into a score gained through discussion with the composer, the score is a finished piece of work. As a collaborator, however, a performer will have an input into the score before it achieves that final form. I had the opportunity to collaborate with four of the composers associated with this project and to contribute to the works during their composition.

Russell Gilmour's *Fretsongs* was commissioned by me as a solo work of approximately ten minute's duration. The first movement was composed in sections and I was able to perform each section to the composer while it was still in sketch form. I performed the

first movement as a separate piece at concerts in Launceston and Hobart before the premiere of both movements at a concert in Sydney in 2001. My suggestions for both movements largely consisted of assistance to increase the fluency, and to support the musical idea by small alterations to articulation, notes, chords, and repeats.

Maria Grenfell was particularly keen to explore the sound of the guitar and to create an idiomatic fluency in both *Di Primavera* and *Four Leunig Pieces*. Although *Di Primavera* for guitar and marimba had been performed in Los Angeles by Eric Benzant-Feldra and Ben Loorz, the composer was dissatisfied with the piece and asked me to collaborate with her on its revision. Suggestions which arose out of discussions with the composer included increasing separation between the foreground and accompanying roles for the instruments to suggest a better dynamic balance, reducing contrapuntal writing for the guitar at points where melodic lines needed greater projection, thinning the harmonic writing for the marimba, adding more *rasqueado* passages for the guitar at climactic points and separating the single movement work into three movements.

Composition of the *Four Leunig Pieces* was highly collaborative and I was able to perform the pieces and offer suggestions, during the composition process. Although both the composer and I felt that the first and fourth movements required little alteration, the second and third were changed extensively from the first sketches. In the second movement, the direction of the main theme was altered by octave substitution of melody notes and the arpeggios in the middle section were rewritten to take advantage of parallel movement along the fretboard. In the third movement, sections were cut or changed both to condense the musical ideas and to strengthen the programmatic effects.

*Dance Rondo I* was Don Kay's first piece for guitar and many of my original suggestions to him concerned the use of harmonics or right hand articulation to take greater advantage of the variety of sounds that the guitar offers. With the *Dance Rondos I* and *II*, relatively little was to change from the draft to the final version except for certain chord voicings, articulation and the use of harmonics.

The *Q* series is an ongoing collaboration with Raffaele Marcellino and the first of the pieces was the result of close collaboration. The composer sat with me as we explored various possibilities for combining the sound of harmonics with right hand tapping of notes on the fretboard. The final idiomatic collection of natural and artificial harmonics was the result of several attempts to obtain a sufficient range of pitches from a single distinctive technique. By contrast, *Q1* and *Q2* were the result of collaboration conducted over the telephone between Sydney and Hobart. We exchanged ideas on techniques to complement *Q* and, after a draft score was provided, my input included chordal changes to *Q1* to improve legato and use of slurred articulation in passages in *Q2* to better emphasise rhythmic groups.

The composers represented in this project included two professional guitarists, Graham Southwell Brown and John Lockwood, and I approached their pieces as an interpreter of the music rather than as collaborator. In the case of *Three Poems for Guitar* by Brown, I also provided editorial expertise to generate a performance edition. The other works in this project were collaborative and it is interesting to note the different processes of collaboration preferred by the composers. The works by Grenfell and Marcellino were

the result of the greatest degree of interaction and reflected the desire of each of the composers to explore the idiomatic sounds and techniques available on the instrument during the early stages of composition. Both composers sought information about the means of obtaining distinctive guitar sounds and these sounds became integral to their pieces. The works by Gilmour and Kay, on the other hand, were composed somewhat independently of the guitar sounds that were later to become part of the final score through the collaborative process. As collaborators, both composer and performer define the scope of their collaboration in the compositional process and my contribution to the work of these four composers has been to provide them with greater insight into how their pieces may be realised and to provide advice that may enhance the fluency and sonority of their works.

## *Chapter Four*

### **Conclusion**

This exegesis has sought to provide a context for my research into the nature of interpretation and collaboration in realising new works for guitar through performance, recording, and editing. In Chapter One, the writings of Aaron Copland and Theodor Adorno, among others, provided a basis for examining interpretation in music and the related issues of whether a composer's ideas could be communicated to the audience exactly as intended, and the extent to which the score represented these ideas. Fidelity to the score is the central question faced by interpreters in establishing their creative boundaries, and the approaches to this issue taken by Glenn Gould, Walter Gieseking, and Wanda Landowska were compared.

In Chapter Two, the collaboration between Segovia and Ponce, as described by Segovia in his correspondence with Ponce, was presented as a useful model for other collaborators where the intention of both composer and performer is to increase the fluency and sonority of a new musical work on the instrument. The attitudes of composers to collaboration, and the impact of that collaboration on their creativity and professional development were also considered. The experiences of Elliot Carter, Charles Ives, Philip Glass, Liza Lim, and John Cage were cited to illustrate different attitudes and how these attitudes may change during a composer's career.

Chapter Three provided a context for the pieces included in this project. Biographical information on the composers and a comment on the formal characteristics and style of

the works were included along with a brief explanation of my involvement as collaborator, interpreter or editor of the final score.

In fulfilling the role of intermediary between the composer and audience, an interpreter is obliged to balance the literal requirements of the score with an understanding of the composer's intentions and the needs of the performance. As outlined previously, both Copland and Adorno have agreed that it is impossible to perform music without interpretation and many composers would acknowledge that the experience of hearing diverse interpretations of their music enriches their own understanding of the pieces.

Finding a balance between slavish adherence to the score and a too liberal departure from its requirements is a central concern for the interpretive performer. The different approaches of Gould, Giesecking, and Landowska, as discussed in Chapter Two, represent a broad spectrum of approaches to this question of fidelity to the score.

While the approaches of Giesecking and Gould were both distinctive and artistically successful, from my own perspective they appear inherently limiting, especially for the interpretation of works by living composers. Both approaches build an interpretation outwards from the central core, that being the performer's understanding of the score alone. Despite his commitment to an overtly creative interpretive process, Gould's focus on the structure of the pieces inevitably limited the range of meaning he might attach to the music and his selective fidelity to the pitches but not to any of the composer's expressive markings seems artificially contrived. Similarly, Giesecking's commitment to a controlled and precise rendition of all the notes and markings in the

score left a relatively narrow band of possible interpretations, which could be at risk of being perceived as merely ‘eloquent’ or lacking in depth and poetry.

Landowska is furthest removed in time from the present day; yet her approach to interpretation seems in many ways more contemporary. Her concern was to place the composer’s work in both an historical and stylistic context and to allow this to inform, but not to dictate her interpretation. It seems increasingly rare for an interpreter to limit his or her understanding of a piece to the score alone and professional musicians of the present day are able to draw on an ever increasing body of research to provide a historical and stylistic context for the music at hand.

Although contemporary interpreters may differ greatly to Landowska in the detail of their interpretations, many would share her objective of an interpretation that is well informed and sympathetic to the composer’s idiom yet unfettered in its expressive range. An example can be found in the description by the guitarist, David Starobin, of the lengths he took to better understand the musical language of the 19<sup>th</sup> century guitar and concertina virtuoso Giulio Regondi (1822-1872), for a series of guitar recitals in the 1990s that featured Regondi’s music.

My work with the Regondi expert Douglas Rogers has given me a window into the little-known and little-respected world of Victorian music. I’ve gone as far as purchasing an antique Wheatstone concertina upon which I’m very slowly making my way through Regondi’s method. Doug has generously shared his



knowledge of Regondi's life and art with me, for which I am eternally grateful.

(Starobin, quoted in Cooper, 1995, p. 14)

Like Landowska, Starobin sought a greater understanding of the score by embracing its historical and stylistic context and he shares Landowska's enjoyment of the creative freedom that is necessary to interpret music of the past. In the same interview in 1995 he commented: "We humans will hopefully always play with inspired, personally idiosyncratic notions of what 'then' was like." (Starobin, quoted in Cooper, 1995, p. 12) Similarly, the relatively recent comment, by pianist and scholar Charles Rosen, that "...the most successful performances of contemporary works, as of the music of the past, are those that only give the illusion of remaining faithful to the text while they hide a genuine and deeply rooted freedom of interpretation" (Rosen, 1998, p. 73) echoes Landowska's approach. Although intentionality in the transmission of the composer's ideas to the audience is limited, it seems to me that the greatest likelihood of a satisfying musical experience for the listener occurs when there is a high level of coherence and commitment in the work of the interpreter.

Interpreters who collaborate with composers in the creation of new music are able to test their own understanding of the draft score and may amplify, enhance or help to define the composer's ideas. Interpreters of new music who have not collaborated with the composer still may form a greater understanding of the composer's original intention through discussing the work with the composer, or by investigating their writings or other public comments. Landowska's respect for the composer's ideas combined with her firm belief that interpretation was her own domain, is an attitude that seems to me

closer to that needed for both interpretation of finished scores and collaboration by an interpreter with a composer.

Neither composer nor performer can dictate what occurs in the imagination of the listener, and the composer may find that how the audience perceives his or her music will in turn influence the composer's own perceptions. Working collaboratively with a performer may condense and intensify the symbiotic process whereby the composer's perceptions of his or her music begin to change. The collaborative interaction might even partially blur the distinction between performer and composer in the creation of the final work and Liza Lim's comments, given in Chapter Three, clearly suggested that this had been her experience in collaborating with the Elision ensemble. Many composers for guitar have collaborated with guitarists to "pool knowledge" and have, no doubt, been influenced by the performers in writing for the instrument. We can only speculate as to what extent Segovia's lengthy collaboration influenced Ponce's compositional style over time.

In this exegesis, I have discussed some of the goals aspired to in the process of collaboration between performers and composers. These included facilitating composition for less familiar instruments such as guitar, increasing the understanding by performers and composers of each other's techniques and objectives, and improving the access by composers to audiences and by audiences to new music. Beyond serving the professional needs of performers and composers, collaboration can be an important stimulus to the creativity of those involved. This last reason has been particularly important in the context of this project. Although most professional composers and

performers in Tasmania maintain a profile beyond the State's boundaries, the compact nature of this musical community has provided an additional stimulus to creativity. The opportunity to collaborate and to hear their guitar works performed has allowed the composers in this project to generate this small but valuable collection of new works for the instrument. In addition, it has provided me with the opportunity to gain greater insight into the compositional process and greater understanding of my role as interpreter. It is hoped that through recording, publication of the edited scores and performances by myself and others that these new works will secure their place in the repertoire for guitar.

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## *Appendix A*

### **Four Tasmanian Guitar Solos**

#### Performance Editions:

Graham Southwell Brown, *Three Poems for Guitar* (1997)

Russell Gilmour, *Fretsongs* (2000)

Maria Grenfell, *Four Leunig Pieces* (2002)

Don Kay, *Dance Rondos I* (1996) and *II* (2000)

## **A note to the performer...**

These four guitar-solos were composed between 1996 and 2002 by composers living on Australia's beautiful southern island, Tasmania. In presenting this performance edition, I have strived to provide a score that is clear and easy to read. I have chosen to provide more detailed indications for left hand position to remove any ambiguity about where notes may be found on the fret-board. As this renders string numbers superfluous, they have not been included except to indicate harmonics. The layout allows for page-turns and a key to editorial symbols is provided below.

I have worked closely with the composers of each of these works and have thoroughly enjoyed seeing these pieces emerge through draft form to concert performance and recording. I hope that some of this same enjoyment is available to you through this edition.

*David Malone, June 2003*

### **Graham Southwell Brown, *Three Poems for Guitar* (1997)**

Based in Hobart, Tasmania, Graham Southwell Brown (1959-), is a guitarist, educator and composer who owns and practices in a successful multi-media consultancy. *Three Poems for Guitar* was composed not long after Brown moved to Tasmania. Other pieces he composed at the time were exclusively interactive, computer-based works including *Guitar* (1997), *Not My Time* (1997), and *I grieve, and dare not show my Discontent* (1997).

*Three Poems for Guitar* is in three movements and has a total duration of approximately eight minutes. The writing is extremely idiomatic, making use of natural and artificial harmonics, open strings in combination with stopped strings for arpeggiated and slurred passages, parallel harmonic movement and quartal harmony. These techniques reflect Brown's extensive knowledge of the instrument in both its jazz and classical usage. Although the piece never sounds overtly like jazz, the alternation between single note and chordal sections and the voicing of the chords occasionally suggest this influence.

### **Russell Gilmour, *Fretsongs* (2000)**

Majoring in musicology and ethnomusicology as an undergraduate, Russell Gilmour (1956), also studied composition with Ann Ghandar and Graeme Koehne at the University of New England, Armidale. In 1994, he gave up full-time teaching and moved to Tasmania to devote more time to composition. Numerous soloists and ensembles, including the Queensland, Tasmanian and Adelaide Symphony Orchestras, the Queensland Philharmonic and the Australian Chamber Orchestra have performed his music.

*Fretsongs* is nominally in two movements and each movement is in several distinct sections to be performed without significant break between sections or movements. The second movement carries the subtitle "...Bach sleeps" and the work, as a whole, reflects Gilmour's continuing interest in the music of J.S. Bach. Like his earlier work from that



time for the Tasmanian Saxophone Quartet, *If Bach rode Bikes* (1998), *Fretsongs* is melodically inventive, occasionally contrapuntal and maintains strong rhythmic momentum throughout.

*Fretsongs* was commissioned in 2000 by David Malone with financial assistance from the Tasmanian Department of State Development through Arts Tasmania.

### **Maria Grenfell, *Four Leunig Pieces* (2002)**

Currently lecturing in composition and aural studies at the Conservatorium of Music, University of Tasmania, Maria Grenfell (1969-) was born in Malaysia and raised in New Zealand. She undertook professional training as a composer in New Zealand and the United States and this included a Master of Music degree at the University of Canterbury, a Master of Arts Degree at the Eastman School of Music and a Doctorate of Musical Arts from the University of Southern California. Her teachers included Stephen Hartke, Erica Muhl, Joseph Schwantner and Samuel Adler. Her pieces have been inspired by poetry, literature, visual sources and Maori culture.

Maria Grenfell composed the *Four Leunig Pieces* in May and June 2002 for premiere by David Malone at the Darwin International Guitar Festival in July of that year. The four movements are each a response to different cartoons from *Short Notes from the Long History of happiness* by Melbourne cartoonist, Michael Leunig. Leunig's cartoons are poignant and whimsical and Grenfell's pieces make use of programmatic effects and story-like development to reflect their source.

*Short Notes from the Long History of happiness*, by Michael Leunig, is published by Penguin Books and permission to reproduce the cartoons here is gratefully acknowledged.

### **Don Kay, *Dance Rondos I* (1996) and *II* (2000)**




Born and raised in Tasmania, Don Kay (1933-) completed a music degree at the University of Melbourne before undertaking composition studies with Malcolm Williamson in London between 1959 and 1964. Kay's distinguished career as a composer and educator included the role of Head of Department at the Conservatorium of Music, University of Tasmania from 1990 to 1993. In 1991, Don Kay was appointed a Member of the Order of Australia.

*Dance Rondo I* was composed in 1996 and was featured in SBS television's *A Fork in Australia* programme in 1999. Kay composed *Dance Rondo II* to complement the first piece yet to provide contrast, and they were performed for the first time as a pair in 2001. The composer intends both to have dance-like qualities and commented, in a 2002 programme note, that the first is more stately and ritualistic sounding while the second is more energetic and vigorous until a quietly retiring and gradually fading conclusion.






These Leunig cartoons have been removed for copyright or proprietary reasons.

How to get there, Atmosphere, Spring diary of a small brown bird, Love

## Key to Editorial Symbols

1. Left hand fingering to left of note - 0, 1, 2, 3, 4,
2. Right hand fingering above note - p,i,m,a,
3. Left hand position indicated by Roman numerals - I, II, III, etc.
4. Barré indicated - CI, CII, CIII etc.
5. Partial barré indicated - 1/2CI, 1/2CII, 1/2CIII
6. Hinge barré indicated - h.CI, h.CII, h.CIII
7. Duration of barrés indicated with a square bracket 
8. Harmonics indicated with diamond head note   at actual pitch.
9. Strings are indicated with numbers in circles from high to low pitch  

①
②
③
④
⑤
⑥  
e' b g d A E
10. Harmonics indicated with fret that the harmonic is sounded at  
and may be indicated with a string number - harm. XII  

  
③
11. Right hand harmonics indicated with R.H.
12. Arpeggiated chords with thumb and fingers indicated with 
13. Descending arpeggiated chord indicated with  or  and right hand fingering.
14. Arpeggiated chords with thumb indicated   

p
15. Hammered note sounded by left hand alone - H

These scores have been removed for  
copyright or proprietary reasons.

Graham Southwell Brown, Three Poems for Guitar  
(1997)

Russell Gilmour, Fretsongs (2000)

Maria Grenfell, Four Leunig Pieces (2002) (How to  
get there, Atmosphere, Spring diary of a small  
brown bird, Love)

Don Kay, Dance Rondos I (1996) and II (2000)

Maria Grenfell, Di Primavera for guitar and  
marimba (1998, revised 2001)

## *Appendix C*

### **Recording of the Musical Works**

David Malone, guitar  
with Gary Wain, marimba

Recorded on the 27-29<sup>th</sup> of January 2003  
at the Recital Hall, Conservatorium of Music  
University of Tasmania

Programme order:

- 1-4 Maria Grenfell, *Four Leunig Pieces*  
*How to get there*  
*Atmosphere*  
*Spring Diary of a Small, Brown Bird*  
*Love*
- 5-6 Don Kay, *Dance Rondos I and II*  
*I*  
*II*
- 7-9 Graham Southwell Brown, *Three Poems for Guitar*  
*No. 1*  
*No. 2*  
*No. 3*
- 10-12 Raffaele Marcellino, *Q*  
*Q*  
*Q1*  
*Q2*
- 13-15 Maria Grenfell, *Di Primavera* for guitar and marimba  
*I*  
*II*  
*III*
- 16-17 Russell Gilmour, *Fretsongs*  
*I*  
*II*
- 18 John Lockwood, *Mobiles*